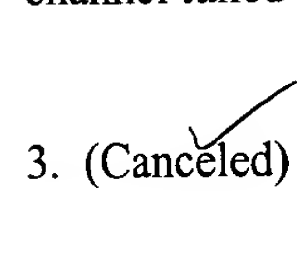
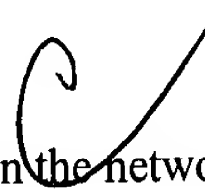


IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated below.

1. (Original) A method of assigning a user to a network chat room, the chat room for distributing messages received from chat room members to other chat room members, the method comprising:
determining television programming viewed by a network user at a networked device;
and
assigning the network user to a chat room corresponding to the determined television programming.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein determining comprises determining based on a channel tuned to by the networked device.
3. (Canceled) 
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the network comprises the Internet. 
5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the chat room comprises a chat room for a particular television show.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the chat room comprises a chat room for a particular network.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising receiving a message from a network user assigned to the chat room and distributing the received message to other chat room members.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising determining whether to assign a person to a chat room.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein determining whether to assign comprises determining how recently the user was last assigned to a chat room.

10. (Currently Amended) A method of assigning a user to a chat room, the method comprising:
providing a user interface that displays television programming;
transmitting identification of the television programming displayed on the user interface to a network server;
receiving an indication of a chat room assigned based on the transmitted identification of television programming displayed on the user interface; and
presenting a the assigned chat room on the user interface that includes messages received by the network server from other users viewing the television programming.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein transmitting identification comprises transmitting a channel number.

12. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein transmitting identification comprises transmitting a television network identifier.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10, wherein transmitting identification comprises transmitting an identifier of a particular television program.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10, wherein transmitting identification comprises transmitting identification in response to user interaction with a user interface element.

16. (Original) A system for assigning a person to a chat room, the system comprising:
server software resident on a network server, the software including:

instructions for distributing messages received from chat room members to other chat room members;

instructions for providing chat rooms corresponding to different television programming; and

instructions for determining the television programming tuned to by a networked device that receives television programming; and

assigning a network user using the networked device to a chat room based on the determined television programming; and;

client software residing on the networked device, the client software including:

instructions for transmitting identification of the television programming being displayed by the networked device; and

instructions for displaying chat room messages submitted by other chat room members.

17. (Original) A computer program, disposed on a computer readable medium, for assigning a user to a network chat room, the chat room for distributing messages received from chat room members to other chat room members, the program including instructions for causing a processor to:

determine television programming viewed by a network user at a networked device; and
assign the network user to a chat room corresponding to the determined television programming.

18. (Currently Amended) A computer program, disposed on a computer readable medium, for assigning a user to a chat room, the program including instructions for causing a processor to:

provide a user interface that displays television programming;
transmit identification of the television programming to a network server;
receive an indication of a chat room assigned based on the transmitted identification of television programming displayed on the user interface; and
present a the assigned chat room that includes messages received by the network server from other users viewing the television programming.

✓
19-25 (Cancelled)

Please add the following new claims.

26. (New) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
determining a change in the programming viewed by the network user; and
automatically assigning the network user to a new chat room corresponding to the change
in programming.

27. (New) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
determining a change in programming viewed by the network user;
waiting a predetermined period of time for another change in network programming; and
automatically assigning the network user to a new chat room corresponding to the change
in programming after the predetermined period of time is exceeded.

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28. (New) The method of claim 10 further comprising:
transmitting a change in the programming viewed by the network user; and
automatically presenting to the network user a new chat room corresponding to the
change in programming.

29. (New) The method of claim 10 further comprising:
transmitting a change in programming viewed by the network user;
waiting a predetermined period of time for another change in network programming; and
automatically presenting the network user to a new chat room corresponding to the
change in programming after the predetermined period of time is exceeded.

30. (New) The system of claim 16 wherein the client software includes instructions to:
determine a change in programming viewed by the network user;
wait a predetermined period of time for another change in network programming; and

automatically assign the network user to a new chat room corresponding to the change in programming after the predetermined period of time is exceeded.

31. (New) The system of claim 16 wherein the client software includes instructions to:
transmit a change in the programming viewed by the network user; and
automatically present to the network user a new chat room corresponding to the change in programming.

32. (New) A computer program of claim 17 further comprising instructions to:
determine a change in programming viewed by the network user;
wait a predetermined period of time for another change in network programming; and
automatically assign the network user to a new chat room corresponding to the change in programming after the predetermined period of time is exceeded.

33. (New) A computer program of claim 17 further comprising instructions to:
transmit a change in the programming viewed by the network user; and
automatically present to the network user a new chat room corresponding to the change in programming.

34. (New) A computer program of claim 18 further comprising instructions to:
transmit a change in the programming viewed by the network user; and
automatically present to the network user a new chat room corresponding to the change in programming.

35. (New) A computer program of claim 18 further comprising instructions to:
transmit a change in programming viewed by the network user;
wait a predetermined period of time for another change in network programming; and
automatically present the network user to a new chat room corresponding to the change in programming after the predetermined period of time is exceeded.